

**IN THE CLAIMS**

**Please DELETE claim 15.**

**Please AMEND the claims as follows:**

1. (amended) A method for producing a copolymer of an alkyl vinyl ether and maleic anhydride using a solution feeding type slurry-polymerization method which comprises the steps of:
  - (i) feeding an organic solvent which dissolves a copolymer to be produced and maleic anhydride into a reaction vessel, and heating a homogeneous maleic anhydride solution formed;
  - (ii) feeding an alkyl vinyl ether into the reaction vessel and copolymerizing the alkyl vinyl ether with maleic anhydride in the presence of a free radical initiator to produce a slurry in which the produced copolymer is suspended in a reaction medium;
  - (iii) cooling the slurry once to form a homogeneous solution;
  - (iv) heating the slurry again to precipitate a copolymer; and
  - (v) removing the organic solvent used in the reaction under a condition in the range of a temperature capable of maintaining the slurry state.
2. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the organic solvent is carboxylic acid ester.

3. (original) The method according to claim 2 wherein the carboxylic acid ester is an acetate.
4. (original) The method according to claim 2 wherein the carboxylic acid ester is ethyl acetate.
5. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the organic solvent is ethyl acetate and the weight ratio of maleic anhydride versus ethyl acetate in the homogeneous maleic anhydride solution is in the range of 1:5 to 1:30.
6. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the using weight ratio of maleic anhydride versus alkyl vinyl ether is in the range of 1:1 to 1:3.
7. (previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the alkyl vinyl ether has 1 to 5 of carbon atoms.
8. (original) The polymerization method according to claim 7 wherein the alkyl vinyl ether is methyl vinyl ether.
9. (previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the total amount of free radical initiators to be used in the polymerization is in the range of 0.005 to 0.5% by weight based on the maleic anhydride.

10. (previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the polymerization temperature is in the range of 40 to 120°C.
11. (original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the free radical initiator is at least one selected from the member consisting of a peroxy ester, a diacyl peroxide a dialkyl peroxide, a hydroperoxy ester and an azonitrile.
12. (original) The method according to claim 6 wherein the using weight ratio of maleic anhydride versus the alkyl vinyl ether is in the range of 1:1.5 to 1:2.5.
13. (original) The method according to claim 9 wherein the total amount of the free radical initiators to be used in the polymerization is in the range of 0.01 to 0.2% by weight based on the maleic anhydride.
14. (original) The method according claim 10 wherein the polymerization temperature is in the range of 50 to 90°C.
15. (deleted) The method according to claim 1 wherein, after the slurry is produced, the slurry is once cooled to form a homogeneous solution, and then, heated again to precipitate a copolymer.

16. (amended) A method for producing a copolymer of an alkyl vinyl ether and maleic anhydride using a solution feeding type slurry-polymerization method which comprises the steps of:
- (i) feeding an organic solvent which dissolves a copolymer to be produced and maleic anhydride into a reaction vessel, and heating a homogeneous maleic anhydride solution formed
  - (ii) feeding an alkyl vinyl ether into the reaction vessel and copolymerizing the alkyl vinyl ether with maleic anhydride in the presence of a free radical initiator to produce a slurry in which the produced copolymer is suspended in a reaction medium; ~~The method according claim 1~~ wherein, after completion of polymerization, a bad solvent of the copolymer is added; and
  - (iii) removing the organic solvent used in the reaction under a condition in the range of a temperature capable of maintaining the slurry state.
17. (original) The method according claim 16 wherein the bad solvent is added while removing the organic solvent, and subsequently, both of the organic solvent and the bad solvent are removed.
18. (previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the organic solvent is removed while maintaining the copolymer, produced by copolymerizing the alkyl vinyl

ether and maleic anhydride in the presence of a free radical initiator, in the temperature range of 50 to 85°C.

19. (previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the organic solvent is removed while maintaining the copolymer, produced by copolymerizing the alkylvinyl ether and maleic anhydride in the presence of a free radical initiator, in the temperature range of 70 to 85°C.

Claims 20-29 have been withdrawn from consideration.